Decisions of Pravasi Bhartiya Sammelan

†633.SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in the implementation of decisions taken during Pravasi Bhartiya Sammelan, 2008;

(b) whether Mini Pravasi Bhartiya Divas has been celebrated in other countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) conventions serve as a platform for deliberations on matters of concern or interest to the Overseas Indian Community and no decisions are taken at these conventions. The details of the progress made on the announcements made during PBD-2008 are given in the Statement. (*See* below)

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Two Mini Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conventions have been held so far. The first was held in New York on 23rd September, 2007 in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) under the tagline "Engaging the Diaspora: The Way Forward".

The second mini PBD titled 'PBD Singapore' was organized on 9-11 October 2008 in Singapore in partnership with the Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SICCI) and Confederation of Indian industry (CII). The tagline for this high profile event was "PBD Singapore: Towards a Dynamic Indian Diaspora". Hon'ble President Mr. S R Nathan, Prime Minister Hon'ble Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Deputy Prime Minister Professor S. Jayakumar and Minister Mentor Mr. Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, Prime Minister of Mauritius Hon'ble Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam and Minister of Human Resources of Malaysia Datuk Dr S. Subramaniam were among the dignitaries who attended it.

Statement

The details of the progress made on the announcements made during PBD-2008

1. Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of People of Indian Origin

   The Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of People of Indian Origin is intended to serve as the highest policy level advisory body on matter relating to India's engagement with Overseas Indians. It will draw upon the experience and knowledge of eminent people of Indian origin in diverse fields from across the world. The Council chaired by the Prime Minister has eminent people of Indian Origin from diverse sectors from across the world as its Members.

2. India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians

   India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians, is a not-profit trust registered by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India to provide a credible window for Overseas Indian Philanthropy in India's Social development. The objective of the foundation is to facilitate philanthropic activities by Overseas Indians including through innovative project and instruments such as micro credit for rural entrepreneurs, self help groups for economic empowerment of women, best practice interventions in primary education and technology interventions in rural health care delivery.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

3. Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment (now renamed as Indian Council of Overseas Employment)

This has been established as a Society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and was registered on 30th July, 2008.

4. Global Indian Network of Knowledge (Global INK)

Global Indian Network of Knowledge (Global INK), an electronic platform will connect people of Indian Origin from a variety of Disciplines, recognized as leaders in their respective fields, not just in their country of residence but globally as well, with knowledge users at the national and sub-national levels in India. The network will serve as a strategic 'virtual think tank'. The outcome targeted will be the germination of ideas on development, identification of the key elements in addressing the challenges to development and articulating and mapping out solution through innovation and technological interventions.

5. PIO/NRI University

The task of setting up the first PIO/NRI university at Bangaluru has been entrusted to the Manipal Academy of Higher Education Trust (MAHET).

Safety of Indian Workers Abroad

634. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has entered into agreements with foreign countries to protect the life and employment of Indians working there;

(b) if so, the number of countries with which our country has made mutual agreement in this regard;

(c) the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) The protection and welfare of emigrant workers requires bilateral cooperation. India had signed Labour Agreements with Jordan and Qatar in 1980s. The Ministry, after its creation in 2004, has made concerted efforts to enter into bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with all the major receiving Countries for ensuring the safety and welfare of our emigrant workers. MoUs have been signed with DAE in December, 2006, with Kuwait in April 2007, with Oman in November 2008, with Malaysia in January 2009 and with Bahrain in June, 2009.

The MoUs contain broad principles for enhancing employment opportunities and for ensuring that the recruitment and terms of employment are in conformity with the laws of both the Countries, measures to be taken by the host Country for protection and welfare of the workers and constitution of a Joint Working Group for effective implementation of the MoU.

Details of Indian in Foreign Countries

635. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state: